

A Report on
The House located at 42-44 Powers Court
Signal Hill
St. John's, Newfoundland

to

Canadian Historic Sites and Monuments Board

by

Martin L. Bowe
15 Kings Bridge Road
St. John's, Newfoundland

March 12, 1970

For the purpose of this report, the house located at 42/44 Powers Court, off Signal Hill Road in St. John's, Newfoundland, will be referred to below as The House.

The earliest reference (1) to the property on which The House is situated dates October 21, 1803. This reference indicates that James Anderson has been given permission to erect a barn 36 feet by 16 feet on property previously belonging to Jonathan Ogden*. On October 22, 1804, Anderson was given permission to build a dwelling house near the road leading to Signal Hill (2). On a map of 1849 (3), two structures appear which could be said to be the buildings mentioned above. The location of these buildings, however, is at a considerable distance from the site of The House.

Two maps dated 1806 (4&5) show no structure on the site presently occupied by The House. A map dated November 20, 1814 (6) and its accompanying list of Ordnance holdings, does not indicate The House. It is also worth noting that on these three maps the site of The House always appears outside Ordnance Boundaries.

A map dated June 21, 1841 (7) is the first map to show a house on the site of The House. As before, the site is still outside Ordnance Boundaries. A report of May 11, 1841 (8) consisting of nine statements and nine plans showing all Ordnance holdings in Newfoundland makes no mention of The House.

The House next appears on a plan of Ordnance Lands dated February 23, 1843 (9) and is shown as situated outside the Ordnance Boundary. A map (3) of 1849 shows The House to lie on Anderson's Ground, outside Ordnance Boundaries and outside a tract of land that the Ordnance proposed to purchase

*Ogden was appointed Chief Justice, September 8, 1802
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at that time. Further maps, relating to this proposed purchase, dated June 21, 1850 (10) and July 2, 1850 (11) show The House outside Ordnance Boundaries.

A report of August 20, 1851 (12) on Ordnance holdings in St. John's, accompanied by a plan depicting in detail all properties mentioned, does not include The House among the properties held.

The property on which The House is situated was sold by Charlotte Anderson, wife of James, to Henry Tillman on February 25, 1860 (13). Mary Tillman, wife of Henry, sold the property to John Power on some unrecorded date between 1862 and 1864 (14). In 1878, John Power sold the property to Patrick Power. From that date to the present the property does not appear to have changed hands except to pass from Mary Power to her husband, William Finlay, the present owner.

It should be noted that the early land grants contained in Volumes one through seven were burnt in the fire of 1892. It should also be noted that on none of the maps on which The House is depicted does the structure appear as other than a single house. All these maps indicate house divisions where they occur.

Conclusion

As far as can be gathered, The House was built sometime between 1806 and 1841, but neither the builder nor the date of construction can be determined.

To my knowledge, The House and the site on which it stands never lay inside Ordnance Boundaries and was never in any way property held by the Ordnance. Thus, I can only conclude that The House was never owned by the military or put to military use.

Martin L. Bowe

Acknowledgement:

Mr. W. Walsh, Chief Surveyor and Mr. W. Titford, Chief Draughtsman of the Department of Mines, Agriculture & Resources of the Provincial Government, verified all locations of The House, property and Ordnance boundaries.

15 King's Bridge Road,
St. John's, Newfoundland.
March 12, 1970.

Mr. A. J. H. Richardson,
Canadian Historic Sites and Monuments,
Room 1122,
400 Laurier Avenue West,
Ottawa 4, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Richardson:

As you requested, I have carried out research into the House presently located at 42-44 Powers Court off Signal Hill Road, in St. John's, Newfoundland. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first time that this house has been historically investigated. This report will bear out my conclusions that this House was never owned or put to military use.

This investigation, as I understand, was instigated by Dr. George Story of the Newfoundland Historic Trust, who having made inquiries, was given the impression that the House might have at one time been military property.

Any action taken on the basis of this report must be taken only in the realization that the report was compiled in the course of one week. This severely limited the amount of research that could be done. Nevertheless, I do feel that further research would only serve to substantiate my conclusions.

For the purpose of this report, I made use of the Newfoundland Archives, Crown Lands Registry and the Historic Resources Division's collection of records and maps. A detailed list of the relevant material is included at the end of the report. Because of the time limit and lack of necessary facilities, it has not been possible to provide you with copies of the material consulted. Should you wish copies, I will be quite happy to provide you with them at your request.

If I can be of any assistance to you in this or any other matter, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

Martin L. Bowe

APPENDIX

1. Colonial Records 1802-1804 Vol. 17, Page 216

"James Anderson is hereby permitted to erect a barn 36 x 16 on premises in his possession which he purchased from Jonathan Ogden.

21 October, 1803"

2. Colonial Records 1804-1806 Vol. 18, Page 84

"James Anderson has my permission to build a dwelling house on a piece of ground within described, near the Road leading to Signal Hill, late in the possession of Jonathan Ogden.

22 October, 1804".

3. Newfoundland Historic Resources Division Map 31 October, 1849

"The space stained pink shews the position of Jackson's Farm ordered to be purchased for building the New Military Hospital per B.O. 31 October, 1849 1GF 1200".

4. Public Records Office S.Q. 396 - Reference W.O. 55/2344
Extracts Plan 2

"Survey of the several parcels of ground occupied by or the property of Ordnance at St. John's, Newfoundland, September, 1806"

Date of Map, 14 October, 1806

5. Public Records Office S.Q. 684 - Reference W.O. 44/153
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"Map of the Town and Harbour of St. John's, Nfld.

The yellow line is reduced from a survey of the land round Fort Townshend. The figures relate to the list of leases upon, etc. All the enclosures made by individuals on the peninsula of Signal Hill are marked as they existed on

the 20 September, 1806"

Map dated 14 October, 1806

6. Public Records Office S.Q. 849 Reference-W.O. 78/2493

"Schedule of Ordnance and adjoining lands as numbered in the annexed Plan, at and in the Vicinity of St. John's Newfoundland, shewing the several encroachments that have taken place within the Ordnance Boundaries (which are marked by a yellow line) as established by the Proclamation of Governor Daff in the year 1773 and of Governor Holloway in the year 1807"

"Plan of the Town and Harbour, with the boundaries of the Land granted to the Ordnance by Admirals Daff and Holloway (stained yellow) in the vicinity of St. John's, Newfoundland.

November 20, 1814"

7. Newfoundland Historic Resources Division Plan A

"General Plan of the Position of St. John's, Newfoundland being Plan A of Revised Concentration on Signal Hill to accompany revised estimate and report of Lt.-Colonel Sir Richard Bonnycastle"

dated 21 June, 1841

8. Public Records Office S.Q. 874 Reference - W.O. 55/2802

"Nine statements covering all the Ordnance holdings in Newfoundland.

May 11, 1841

9. Public Records Office (no reference numbers given on microfilm)

"Plan of the Ordnance Lands at St. John's, Nfld."

10. Newfoundland Historic Resources Division

"Contoured Plan of Ground proposed to be purchased at St. John's, Newfoundland by the Board of Ordnance for Building and other purposes, also of a portion of land adjoining the same."

June 21st., 1850

11. Newfoundland Historic Resources Division

"Contoured Plan of Ground ordered to be purchased at St. John's, Newfoundland, and a portion proposed to be purchased."

July 2, 1850.

12. Public Records Office S/Q 875 Reference W.O. 55/2988
Plan Number 1

"St. John's, Newfoundland Plan shewing the whole of the Ordnance Property in St. John's and its vicinity, called for by Boards order of 10th. January, 1851⁰/₈."

"To accompany Engineers and Deputy Ordnance Storekeepers letter to secretary of the Board of Ordnance, dated 20th. August, 1851".

dated August 20, 1851.

13. Newfoundland Crown Lands Registry

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14. Newfoundland Crown Lands Registry

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